

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /056 W

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R 080003Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1616

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT MORESBY 0679

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PBOR, PP

SUBJ: ANGLICAN ARCHBISHOP OF MELANESIA SUPPORTS BOUGAINVILLE  
REUNION WITH SOLOMON ISLANDS

1. ACCORDING TO THE CONFIDENTIAL QUARTERLY SUMMARY FOR APRIL-JUNE 1976 PREPARED BY THE AUSTRALIAN COMMISSIONER PHILIP JACKSON AT HONIARA, THE ANGLICAN ARCHBISHOP OF MELANESIA NORMAN KITCHENER PALMER IS A STRONG SUPPORTER OF BOUGAINVILLE SECESSION. PALMER WAS REPORTED IN THE MELBOURNE AGE ON APRIL 3, 1976 AS SAYING THAT BOUGAINVILLE AND THE SOLOMONS SHOULD BE REUNITED. WHEN HE RETURNED TO HONIARA HE CLAIMED TO HAVE BEEN MISQUOTED, BUT LATER EVIDENCE SUGGESTS THAT HE IS IN FACT STRONGLY IN FAVOR OF REUNION. THE CHURCH OF MELANESIA IS THE LARGEST AND MOST INFLUENTIAL CHURCH IN THE SOLOMONS AND THE ARCHBISHOP'S SUPPORT FOR BOUGAINVILLE WOULD BE SIGNIFICANT.

2. COMMENT: THE CHURCH OF MELANESIA (ANGLICAN) HAS BEEN INDEPENDENT FOR ABOUT A YEAR. ITS FIRST ARCHBISHOP JOHN CHISHOLM, AN AUSTRALIAN, DIED SUDDENLY MAY24, 1976 AND WAS REPLACED BY PALMER WHO IS A MELANESIAN. WE AGREE WITH JACKSON'S JUDGMENT THAT THE ARCHBISHOP'S SUPPORT WILL BE VERY INFLUENTIAL AMONG SOLOMON ISLANDERS. END COMMENT.

3. BIO INFO FOLLOWS: PALMER IS 47 AND BORN AT MUNDA, NEW GEORGIA. HE WAS EDUCATED AT KOKEQOLO SCHOOL, PAWA SCHOOL AND TE AUTE COLLEGE, NEW ZEALAND. AFTER GRADUATING FROM ARDMORE TEACHERS' COLLEGE NEW ZEALAND, HE TAUGHT AT KING GEORGE VI  
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SCHOOL AT ALIGECEO, MALAITA, AND AT PAWA. IN 1962 HE ENTERED

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, NEW ZEALAND, TO STUDY FOR THE MINISTRY  
AND RETURNED TO THE SOLOMONS THREE YEARS LATER AS AN ANGLICAN  
PRIEST. HE THEN SERVED AS HEADMASTER OF THE PAWA AND ST.  
NICHOLAS SCHOOLS. PALMER WAS APPOINTED DEAN OF ST. BARNABAS  
IN 1971. HE WAS APPOINTED ARCHBISHOP ON JUNE 4, 1975 AND  
CONSECRATED OFFICIALLY NOVEMBER 1, 1975. PALMER IS MARRIED  
WITH FOUR CHILDREN.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** SECESSION, RELIGIOUS LEADERS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 08 JUL 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** BoyleJA  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976PORTM00679  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760262-0937  
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**Office:** ACTION EA  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** BoyleJA  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 20 MAY 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <20 MAY 2004 by ifshinsr>; APPROVED <15 SEP 2004 by BoyleJA>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** ANGLICAN ARCHBISHOP OF MELANESIA SUPPORTS BOUGAINVILLE REUNION WITH SOLOMON ISLANDS  
**TAGS:** PGOV, PBOR, PP, (PALMER, NORMAN KITCHENER)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006